

Bethel "A" Baptist Church
100th Anniversary



JOURNEY
OF
Faith



... and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Matthew 13:16

"A Charge to Keep I Have"

A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify,
a never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill;
O may it all my powers engage to do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care, as in thy sight to live,
and oh, thy servant, Lord, prepare a strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray, and on thyself rely,
assured, if I my trust betray, I shall forever die.

REFLECTING ON YESTERDAY
CELEBRATING THE PRESENT
LIGHTING THE WAY TO THE FUTURE
1919 to 2019

To All Who Read This,

No matter how carefully a history is assembled, there will be omissions and errors. As a Committee, we apologize for those when you come upon them, but we rejoice in the love and compassion of all of those members and pastors who have contributed to this Bethel "A" Baptist community for a century.

We are proud to have served in our capacity as Anniversary Committee members. At a time in our world when there is so much pain and strife, it is important to extend our love and compassion beyond these beloved walls. As we celebrate our past, we look forward to a future filled with the Love of God. May we never lose sight of our blessings.

The Bethel "A" Baptist 100th Anniversary Committee

Table of Contents

Bethel “A” Anniversary Committee	Page 4
Dedication	Page 5
Mission Statement	Page 6
Proclamation	Page 7
A word from the pastor	Page 8
Administration	Page 9-10
Brief History of Bethel “A”	Page 11-12
Early Church	Page 13-15
Former Pastors	Page 16
Former Deacons	Page 17
Former Trustees	Page 18
Former Secretaries	Page 19
Missionary Circle 1997	Page 20
Past & Present Hospitality Ministry	Page 21
Past & Present Ushers	Page 22
Pastorate of Rev. Samuel A. Raper	Page 23-32
Pastorate of Rev. F. H. Goldsmith	Page 33-45
Pastorate of Rev. Fredrick Gordon	Page 46-72
Pastorate of Rev. G. Larry Davis	Page 73-84
Music	Page 85-93
Recognizing Bethel “A” Members of the Golden Years	Page 94-96
Event Highlights of Bethel “A”s 100th Anniversary Celebration	
Concert on Silversteen Playground	Page 97-98
100th Anniversary Open House & Reception	Page 99-101
100th Anniversary Banquet	Page 102-108
100th Anniversary Sunday Morning Service	Page 109-114
100th Anniversary Sunday Brunch	Page 115-116
Memorials	Page 117-136
Dedications	Page 137-170
Witnessing the end of an Era	
Mary C. Jenkins Community Center	Page 171-172
Advertisements	Page 173-181
Anniversary Committee	Page 182

Bethel "A" Baptist Church Anniversary Committee



With all Praise and Glory Honoring Our God, the 100th Year Anniversary Committee of Bethel "A" Baptist Church wishes to thank Reverend Larry Davis and the members of B.A.B.C. for their generous support of the Committee in their efforts to present 100 years of memories to and for our beloved community.

It is our prayer that the history of our church, the memories we share, and the work involved to master this glorious event will stand as a legacy to all our children and theirs as they began their journey of new memories and greater stories to tell.

One hundred years is a very significant number representing the hard work, sweating brows, and tears shed throughout, leading to many happy and blessed hearts. Lingering on the hopes and dreams of our future, we wish to build a better future for our children. Our prayer is that B.A.B.C. continues to be the "Corner Light" in our community and that the hearts and minds of future generations make claim to "A Charge to Keep" for the next 100 years.

Memories gathered and shared, old and new alike, are a part of the many efforts made in presenting you with a book that honors both Our Lord's continued mercy and His grace for B.A.B.C. May it lend your Heart, your Soul, your Mind, and your Eyes overwhelming images of loved ones gone, loved ones near, and loved ones far away. It was a joy compiling cherished thoughts with faces of the past and present.

As we all share in the Body of Christ and the love given to us through Him, may we also share in the memories presented in this book. As a people we are truly blessed. As a Church body we are truly held by a standard that surrounds and takes hold of each "act of faith" leading to the commitments of each "Charge We Have to Keep."

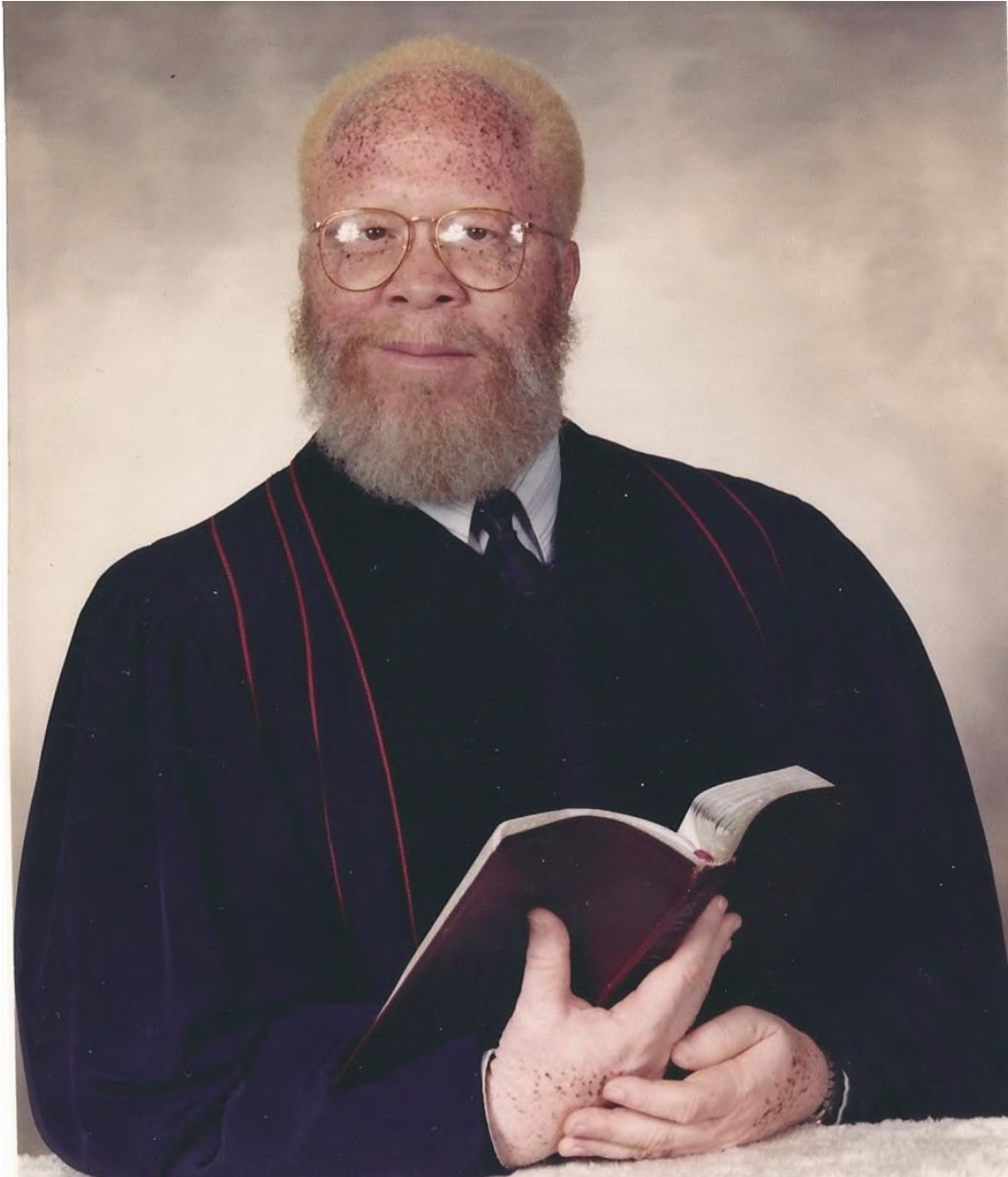
For the physical labor, the cramped hands, and committed hearts—all the community involvement, near and far, as well as families of sister churches, businesses, and all individuals associated with making this 100 Year Anniversary possible, we give praises to Our Lord for you.

On behalf of the 100th Year Anniversary Committee, this book is dedicated not only to Our Savior, but to you, as you turn each page, remembering "The Church on the Corner that Lights the Way."

"KEEP YOUR CHARGE"

From left to right: Loretta Davis, Gloria Williamson, Rebecca Wynn, Minister Ruth Peters, Verdell Townsend, Judy Griffin, Edith Darity, Phratasia Macon, Tommy Kilgore and Sheila Mooney.

Dedication
In Loving Memory of



Reverend Fredrick L. Gordon
Pastorate 1992 – 2014

Our Vision Statement & Our Mission Statement



Our Vision Statement

Inspired. Committed. United, we are an **ICU** (Intensive Care Unit), a place where broken-ness is mended; living our faith in Jesus Christ such that, through us, our neighbors can see HIM, feel HIM and want to experience HIM personally.

Our Mission Statement

We by the Holy Spirit to learn, understand the Word and put into practice the Will of God and the Love of Christ.

Committed to sharing and caring with compassion of our Savior; to witnessing the Gospel in word and deed; and to celebrating His life and the miracles of creation, salvation, and re-birth.

United in His perfect love to maintain a safe haven for worship, healing, recovery, fellowship, and reconciliation; to demonstrate justice; and to love those who the world condemns.



**Proclamation No. 2019-11
Bethel "A" Baptist Church
100th Anniversary Day
July 28, 2019**

WHEREAS, Bethel "A" Baptist Church is commemorating its 100th church anniversary on July 28, 2019, communities and congregations from all over are coming together to help celebrate the marvelous vision *"Inspired, Committed and United, we are an ICU, a place where brokenness is mended by living our faith in Jesus Christ such that, through us, our neighbors can see Him, feel Him and want to experience Him personally."* and

WHEREAS, with every new pastor that came through Bethel "A" Baptist Church, it appeared that God gave each a vision to do something that would improve and enrich the church family; and

WHEREAS, Bethel "A" has continued to advance and grow over the years, starting Rise and Shine Freedom School, CDF touching youth and family members of the community throughout Transylvania County; and,

WHEREAS, Bethel "A" has undergone many transformations over the past 100 years, the original God-given vision remains; *"We are an ICU, a place where brokenness is mended by living our faith in Jesus Christ such that, through us, our neighbors can see Him, feel Him and want to experience Him personally."*

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jimmy Harris, Mayor of the City of Brevard, hereby honor the 100th anniversary of Bethel "A" Baptist Church and proclaim, Sunday, July 28, 2019, as Bethel "A" Baptist Church Day within the City and urge all the citizens of Brevard to pay special tribute to this church on the occasion of their 100th anniversary.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Brevard, North Carolina, to be affixed this the 17th day of June, 2019.



ATTEST:



Jill Murray, CMC
City Clerk



Jimmy Harris
Mayor

A Word From The Pastor



God brings us to the end of our strength, so that we can trust in His ability to do the impossible.

Today we celebrate 100 Years of the faithfulness of our Lord.

For One Hundred Years this community has enjoyed the blessing of God, through the church called Bethel “A” Baptist Church.

God has set our foundation on this corner and held it steady for the purpose of advancing His Kingdom for One Hundred Years .

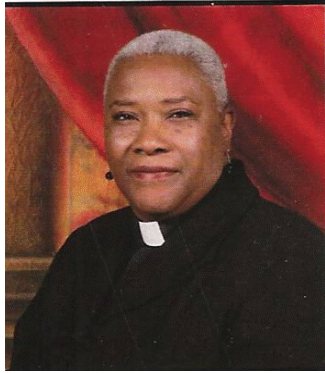
Let me take this precious moment that the Lord has given me to say Congratulations to the Lord for what He has done to our church.

Zechariah 4:6 said, “This is the Word of God to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.’ says the Lord Almighty, what we have done, we did all by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

STAFF



*Associate Pastor
Sharad Creasman*



*Associate Minister
B. Ruth Peters*



*Office Manger
Dianne Gardin*

Deacons



Altha Gordon



Tyron Gordon



Ella Jones



Lewis Whiteside

Officers



*Church clerk
Ruth Peters*



*Treasurer
Marva Lytle*



*Financial Secretary
Rebecca Wynn*

Trustees



Claude Darity



Jay Hemphill



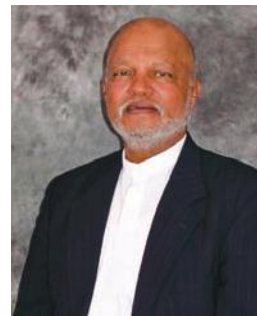
Tommy Kilgore



William Mills



Warren Robinson



Tommy Williamson

Budget & Finance



Loretta Davis



Tessie Stanton



Valeria Smith



Verdell Townsend



Angie Whiteside



Gloria Williamson

A Brief History of Bethel “A” Baptist Church

On July 14, 1919, more than nine decades ago, the Bethel “A” Baptist Church was established as an offspring of Bethel Baptist Church (the first black church in Brevard). Reverend Robert Gills was the supply pastor, with forty members and the following Deacon Board: Alfred B. Benjamin, Thomas Benjamin, Lee A. Kilgore and Lewis W. White. Services were held in the Masonic Lodge on Carver Street for six to eight months. Reverend Gills later became the first pastor, leading the congregation to acquire property and building the original Bethel “A” Baptist Church on the corner of Carver and Oakdale.

The first structure was a frame building constructed at a cost of \$5,000.00 with money raised from donations, rallies and other fund raisers. A large “pot-bellied” coal burning heater, located between the pulpit and the first pew, provided heat during the winter. Deacon Lee Kilgore, for as long as he was able, built the fire and started church service on Sunday mornings.

The women washed and ironed clothes to earn money that was applied toward the building fund. Deacons Tom and Alf Benjamin, who were carpenters by trade, used their connections with the lumberyard to acquire lumber at bargain prices. Deacon White, a cook by trade, also helped to raise money as did many others. The building of the church was a group effort as everybody pitched in as much time and money as they could.

Reverend Gills served as pastor for two years (1919 to 1921). He was followed by Reverend A.B. Roberts (1921 to 1924), Reverend M.C. Rice, Reverend W.H. Miller, Reverend W. Cross, Reverend A.B. Burke, Reverend D.C. Hall, (1932 to 1933) Reverend L.C. Ivey (1933 to 1953), Reverend S. A. Raper (1953 -1968), Reverend F.H. Goldsmith (1968 - 1992), Reverend F.L. Gordon (1992-2014) and Reverend L. Davis (2014 - Present).

The first significant changes to the church building occurred in the early thirties, when the individual chairs in the congregation area were replaced with pews. Reverend M. L. Stewart, a preacher who lived in Brevard, assembled and installed the pews. Though he was never pastor of Bethel “A”, Reverend Stewart was instrumental in helping to keep the church going during some of the tough times.

When the original church bell developed a cracked and had to be replaced, a used bell was acquired from Brevard Baptist Church. The new bell was larger than the original, so that when it was installed, it caused the roof to lean. The supports had to be re-enforced. Also, about this time an indoor baptismal pool was installed in the basement of the church. Prior to the construction of the pool, baptism services were held in the lake at Transylvania Camp (now known as the Music Center), Bethel Baptist Church and an area near Keystone Camp.

Church activities during this era included Sunday services, auxiliary meetings such as the Missionary Circle, Young People’s Baptist Union, Prayer meetings and Revivals.

Etta Kilgore formed a youth choir called the Sunbeam Choir. At one point, Mable Sharp was the pianist. The Bethel “A” congregation also participated in the annual May Day meeting that rotated between French Broad, Davidson River and Glade Creek Baptist Churches of Pisgah Forest, North Carolina. Members from Bethel Baptist Church and Mills Chapel Baptist Church also participated in the day of worship and fellowship. When weather permitted, food prepared by the women of the various churches was served outside. It was spread out on benches, and everybody ate as much as they wanted, because there was always plenty. Both adults and children looked forward to this annual event with anticipation.

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt was another much anticipated activity for the children. The main site for the hunt was on Mount Surprise, a hill with steep sides. The children would remain below while the adults climbed the hill and hid the eggs. When signaled, the children would scurry up the hill, and the hunt was on. Sometimes the hunt would be held at an area near Keystone Camp and at an area near Siniard Lake.

During Reverend L.C. Ivey's tenure, the church experienced modest growth in several ways. A fellowship hall was constructed adjacent to the sanctuary, the church pulpit was refurbished, new seats for the deacons and the choir were purchased. In 1952 the Second Sunday in each month was set aside for Junior Church.

Other changes included the selection of Deacon Arthur Hefner, Jr. as Treasurer and Deacon Quillie Glaze as assistant Chairman of the Deacon Board. Cornelius Hunt and V. B. Betsill were added to the Board of Trustees with Deacon Avery Benjamin, who was the only survivor of the original board. The church purchased its first mimeograph machine and a pulpit Bible. Baptist Training Union was implemented and evening service was established. The church also sponsored local Boy Scout Troop 10 during Reverend Ivey's pastorate.

At a business meeting on December 5, 1941, John Norman and Cornelius Hunt were approved as Trial Deacons. In 1951, Deacon Arthur Hefner Sr. preached a trial sermon. In 1952, Deacon Jim Ferguson received approval, during a church meeting, to preach a trial sermon, and later received approval from the church to be licensed as a preacher. Reverend Ivey's sixteenth anniversary was an interdenominational service with music provided by St. Luke's Methodist Choir. Service was conducted by the Fire Baptized Holiness Church of Brevard, whose pastor Reverend Freeman Dougherty preached the sermon.

From the church meeting minutes, it appears that the church roll grew to about 140, but the net growth among active members remained at about 45 - 55 over the twenty year period. The church was subdivided into the East Wing and the West Wing. Reverend D. C. Hall was put in charge of one wing, and Reverend J. H. Norman was placed in charge of the other. This move seemed to be beneficial during the few months after Reverend Ivey resigned when the church was without a pastor.

After many years, the church building started to deteriorate. A committee was established to raise the funds in an effort to tidy it up. Those selected to the committee were Sisters Hattie White, Lucendia Betsill, S. G. Benjamin, Mable E. Sharp, Beaulina Whiteside and Winona Whiteside.

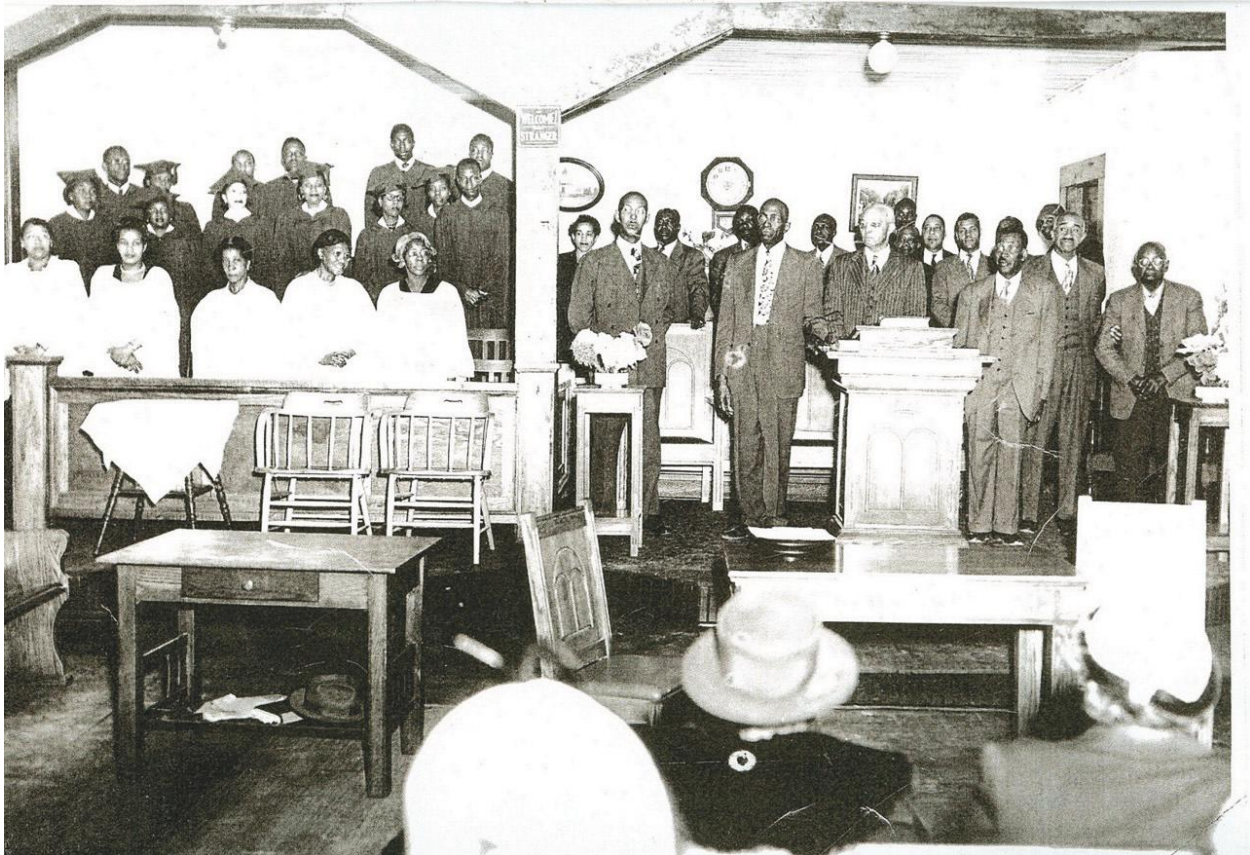
The early Church



Masonic Lodge
Where the members held church after
the split from Bethel Baptist Church



Original Bethel "A" Baptist



EARLY CHURCH CHOIR & DEACONS



EARLY CONGREGATION





REV. D.C. HALL
PASTORATED 1932-1933

Rev. D.C and First Lady Etta Hall



Members of the Bethel 'A' Baptist Church Sunday School class gather in front of the Mack Butler Café in this 1936 photograph.

Former Pastors of Bethel “A”

1919 to 2019



Reverend Robert Gills 1919– 1921

Reverend A. B. Roberts, 1921 to 1924.

Reverend M. C. Rice

Reverend W. H. Miller

Reverend W. Cross

Reverend A. B. Burke

Reverend Dennis C. Hall,

Reverend L. C. Ivey

Reverend Dennis C. Hall

Reverend Samuel A. Raper

Reverend Florence H. Goldsmith

Reverend Frederick L. Gordon

**Former Deacons of
Bethel “A” Baptist Church**

Alfred “Alf” Benjamin	Arthur Madison
Avery Benjamin	Eddie T. Moss
Thomas “Tom” Benjamin	John Norman
Victor B. Betsill	Rufus Norman
Sherman Crite	Roy Robinson
Jim Ferguson	Louis W. White
Quillie Glaze	George Wilkes
Arthur Hefner Sr.	Ulysses Wynn
Arthur Hefner Jr.	Tom Wynn
Cornelius Hunt	William Young
Leander “Lee” A. Kilgore	

**Former Trustees of
Bethel “A” Baptist Church**

Avery Benjamin

V.B. Betsill

Sherman Crite

Jim Ferguson

Arthur Hefner Jr.

Cornelius Hunt

Arthur Madison

Eddie T. Moss

Roy Robinson

Charlie Smith

George Wilkes

Tom Wynn

Ulysses Wynn

**Former Secretaries of
Bethel "A" Baptist Church**



Mrs. Mable Sharpe



Mrs. Edith Darity



Mrs. Shelia Gardin Mooney

Missionary Circle 1997

Bethel "A" Baptist Church



Mrs. Mary Crite



Mrs. Judy Griffin



Ms. Jimelle Hall



Mrs. Cornelius Howell



Mrs. Ressie Madison



Mrs. Marjorie Moss



Mrs. Nora Lee Norman



Mrs. Selena Robinson



Mrs. Wilkie Robinson



Mrs. Hattie Sanders



Mrs. Maggie Scruggs



Mrs. Beaulina Whiteside



Mrs. Rose Wilkes



Mrs. Josephine Wynn



Mrs. Nellie Young

NOT PICTURED

Fannie Ivey

Lurneal Graham

Past & Present Hospitality Ministry



ELIZABETH BAKER



GEORGIA GARDIN



JUDY GRIFFIN



CORDIE HEFFNER



PORTIA JACKSON



MARVA LYTLE



NYLEYA MACON



PHRATISIA MACON



TEMETRIS STRANTON



VERDELL TOWNSEND



ANGIE WHITESIDE



PAIGE WHITESIDE



WILKIE ROBINSON



PAULINE WYNN

CAROLYN CRITE

Past & Present Ushers of Bethel "A"



Elizabeth Baker



William (Bill) Bell



Indiana Conley



Claude Darity



Dorothy Drake



Janice Fritts



Georgia Gardin



Lola Green



Cecilia Howell



Tommy Kilgore



Marva Lytle



Shelia McBee Norman



Sudie Moore



Warren Robinson



Selena Robinson



Lewis Whiteside



Steven Wynn



Ulysses Wynn



Reverend. Samuel A. Raper

Pastorate 1953 - 1968

History continued...

A few months after Reverend Ivey left, Reverend Samuel A. Raper of Shelby, North Carolina was elected the ninth pastor at Bethel "A" Baptist Church by a vote of 27 for and 6 against. He took the job in April of 1953, at a salary of \$45 per Sunday. His installation service was held in May 1953. Reverend Raper commuted from Shelby. He was an effective leader and a good preacher but is most notably mentioned as a teacher, social reformer and an activist against injustice. These characteristics became invaluable to the church and the community as his tenure extended through the turbulent sixties.

Reverend Raper inherited a congregation that had become slowful except for a faithful few and a church that had begun to deteriorate with age. But it did not take him long to make an impact. His early success can be summed up by this excerpt from a 1953 year-end missionary report: "This year our pastor came and began his ministry, giving new life to our church, opening new fields of service and reviving new interest among our members....(house to house visits) encouraged our slack members, and little by little everyone was given a job to do". In his first church conference used Genesis 11:1-6 to emphasize his message, "Don't get scattered, be sure of an understanding, speak one at a time and be on one accord."

During Reverend Raper's first year the choirs were re-organized. The senior choir would sing on first and second Sundays, and the junior choir would sing third and fourth Sunday. A committee was elected to collect money from each member for union and association dues. Candlelight communion service was instituted. Locks for doors and closets were installed to protect the communion set and other church property. Fifteen benches were installed in the balcony. A piano and wash basin were purchased for the annex. The pastor's study was relocated and refurbished to make room for a choir stand. Robes were purchased for the Junior Choir. An oil burning stove was installed and the church bell was removed. The church hosted the State Sunday School Convention.

Reverend Raper encouraged fellowship among Christians. He visited the people of the community regardless of where they went to church. He established joint service each fifth Sunday with Saint Paul Baptist Church of Asheville, North Carolina and Rock Hill Baptist of Shiloh, North Carolina. He started pulpit exchanges where two pastors would preach at each other's church on a given day of service. The church supported Pastor Raper's attendance at various association, state and national meetings. In August of 1962, he preached about tithing at the Lott Carrie Convention in Washington. The sermon brought widespread recognition to him and to Bethel "A" for fine work that the church was doing.

During Reverend Raper's tenure, the Y.M.A. was organized and drew an inspiring interest of the young people. He encouraged parents to guide their children and train them to be leaders for tomorrow. Throughout his pastorate, he emphasized citizenship, integration and education. He challenged young people to be somebody by demanding that they achieve academically. Many responded by pursuing post high school education. In 1963, the church sent financial support to the Baptist Training Union at North Carolina A&T College where some of the local students were attending. On occasion the church sent contributions of \$50 to \$100 to the Oxford Orphanage in Oxford, North Carolina. Vacation Bible School was started and young adults were trained for field missionary work. Alice Glaze was one of the first superintendents. Reverend Raper was openly committed to helping young people.

Under Reverend Raper's leadership sellings and rallies, as a method to fund church activities, were discouraged. Instead, he recommended, encouraged and preached that the church should be funded with tithes and offerings. Once the congregation caught on and started tithing, the church became more prosperous. In less than a year after he arrived, the congregation, led by Deacon Board Chairman, Avery Benjamin, approved and established a fund to replace the aging building with a new church. Each member was asked to pay \$25 a year.

The congregation responded and some outside donations were received. On March 8, 1954, a savings account was opened at the Brevard Federal Loan Association with a deposit of \$1000.

At a church meeting on February 27, 1957, trustees Ulysses Wynn, Eddie T. Moss and Cornelius Hunt were permitted to apply to the Brevard Federal Savings and Loan Association for enough money to complete the project. In August, 1957, the church furniture was moved to the Mary C. Jenkins Community Center where services were held while the new building was being constructed. With \$13,000 in the bank the construction of the new church began. Pastor Raper stayed in Brevard during the time the church was being constructed. In July of 1957, when Deacon Avery Benjamin passed away, his wife Synetha, was named treasurer of the church.

On June 1, 1958, the first service was held in the new church building, a brick structure with an auditorium capacity of 300 people and a balcony capacity of 100. It was equipped with 9 Sunday school rooms, a pastor's study, a ladies lounge, a church office, a kitchen, a fellowship hall, ladies and men restrooms and a baptismal pool.

In the early 1960's Reverend Raper's leadership was instrumental in the successful lawsuit against the Transylvania County School Board calling for integration of the local public schools and ending the busing of high school students to Hendersonville. Some students even went out of state to live with relative to attend high school. Reverend Raper encouraged continued support of the Transylvania Citizens Improvement Organization which was the plaintiff in the lawsuit. He continued to teach about citizenship and the responsibility that comes with it.

In January of 1962 at the monthly church conference, Reverend Raper announced his resignation. He agreed to stay through March to give the congregation time enough to conduct a search for a new pastor. In the March conference he offered to withdraw his resignation and vowed that if the church would support him he would continue to work as hard as or better than in the past. The church had not found a new pastor at this time so it was agreed by majority vote to support Reverend Raper and his pastorate continued. His salary was increased to \$75 per Sunday.

Also in early 1960 the Bible Training Institute was established. It was a teaching ministry that usually ran about two weeks each summer. When pastor Raper was in Brevard he stayed with sister Hattie A. White. In 1964 when Sister White became ill, Sister Rose Wilkes volunteered her home. In 1966, the members decided that the church needed and could afford to build a parsonage. So another successful venture initiated. The parsonage was built at 37 Carver Street at a cost of \$25,000. Reverend Raper never lived in it.

When Reverend Raper resigned in March of 1968, the congregation could look back and be inspired by the sixteen years of blessings under his leadership. Under his leadership the active membership had significantly increased, a new building and parsonage had been built, the annual budget was \$17,000, bills were paid up, and there were \$6000 in savings.

Finance and Building



Left to right: Deacon Fred Mills. Sister Synetha G Benjamin, Rev. Samuel Raper, Deacon Tom Wynn, and Deacon Victor B. Betsill



1957, trustee, Eddie T. Moss, Rev. Raper, trustee Cornelius Hunt and Church Clerk Mable Sharp were permitted to apply to the Brevard Federal Savings and Loan Association for enough money to complete the building of the new church.

Construction of the church began July 1959

Completed June 1958



Bethel "A" Baptist Church
Corner of Carver and Oakdale



Left to right Deacon Roy Robinson, Sister Mable Sharp, Rev. Samuel Raper, Deacon Victor B. Betsill, Sister Cynthia Benjamin, Sister Johnsie L Mills, Deacon Tom Wynn, Deacon Hunt, Deacon Fred Mills



A BLAST FROM THE PAST



GA's Auxiliary



Vacation Bible School Workers



Transylvania Citizen Improvement Organization

In the early 1960's Reverend Raper's leadership was instrumental in successfully organizing the T.C.I.O. (Transylvania Citizen Improvement Organization). The TCIO was established to provide civic, educational, political and economic opportunities for African Americans in Brevard and Transylvania County. Membership was made up of both blacks and whites.

The organization fought racial discrimination in both private and public institutions by building coalitions with white citizens, creating an avenue for all to support and a cause that would help shape the future of Brevard and Transylvania County

The members were concerned about the fact their African American children were forced to travel 42 miles a day to attend public school in another county while their taxes were paying for the white to stay in the county and attend the public school.

Aug. 17, 1962 TCIO filed its civil action suit, in Asheville at U. S. District Court, Western District of North Carolina, before Judge Wilson Warlick. His desegregation decision was effective September 1962 but only eight teens were admitted to Brevard High that month. The next school year, 1963-64, 32 more black teens started school at the same junior and senior high schools as white students.

Transylvania County was the first county in the state of North Carolina to desegregate.

The founders were:



Mr. Grady Elliot



Mr. Cornelius Hunt



Mrs. Ruth Johnstone



Mrs. Evon Kelly



Mrs. Allie B. Mackey



Mrs. Ressie Madison



Mrs. Marjorie Moss



Mrs. Selena Robinson



Mr. Walter Robinson



Mrs. Wilkie Robinson



Mrs. Maggie Scruggs



Mr. Ulysses &
Mrs. Josephine Wynn



In 1966, the members decided that the church needed and could afford to build a parsonage. So another successful venture initiated. The parsonage was built at 37 Carver Street at a cost of \$25,000. Reverend Raper never lived in the parsonage.



Keep a careful watch over yourselves and over the church. The Holy Spirit has made you its leaders. Feed and care for the church of God. He bought it with His own blood.

Acts 20:28 (NLV)



Pastorate of Reverend F. H. Goldsmith
1968 to 1992



Rev. F.H Goldsmith
&
Mrs. Minnie Lee
Goldsmith



Brenda, Duwane, Bonita, Freddie and Levern (2011)



CPL Milton Goldsmith, Vietnam Veteran, was born in South Carolina. He later moved to Brevard, NC. Corporal Milton Goldsmith was a casualty of the Vietnam War. As a member of the Army Selective Service and a Draftee, CPL Goldsmith was killed March 2nd in Binh Dinh, South Vietnam.

He was 20 years old and was not married. It was reported that CPL Goldsmith died in the line of duty. His body was recovered.

CPL Goldsmith is on panel 13W, line 074 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C.

He served our country for less than a year.



On September 4, 1968, Reverend Florence H. Goldsmith of Simpsonville, South Carolina, became the tenth pastor of Bethel "A." He, his wife, Minnie and their family were the first to inhabit the new parsonage. Reverend Goldsmith, a good leader and a very good teacher, broadened the outreach of the ministry. He recognized the need for the church to be more than a Sunday meeting place. He realized that the church had influence that could be used to make the community better which would help the people make a better church. Reverend Goldsmith's strong interest in helping people became apparent as he encouraged self-improvement among the congregation and throughout the community. He even returned to school himself and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Theology from Shaw Divinity School.

- In 1968, the church decided to replace the clear glass windows with stained glass.
- The Pastors Aid Club was established,
- A phone was installed in the pastor's study.
- The church library was opened and run by Vicky and Nicholas Johnston.
- Deacon Roy Robinson was added to the Board of Trustees.
- Ulysses Wynn was appointed chairman the Board of Trustees.

In early 1969, the Benevolent Fund was established to help the sick and needy.

- Sister Rose Wilkes contacted Mrs. Dorothy Bjurg about renting some property for recreational activities for the young people of the community.
- Mrs. Bjurg had donated a gift of \$4800 to the Bethel "A" Baptist Church for a playground. Her request was that it be named Silversteen Memorial Playground, in memory of her late father, Joseph Silversteen.

In 1970 the church decided to provide a life insurance policy for the pastor.

- A College Scholarship Loan Fund was established to assist young men and women who were working toward college degrees.
- The church agreed to sponsor a low-income housing project.

In 1971 the housing project got underway with the acquisition of some land on which 27 houses were built and sold to low income families. This new housing development was named Mickey Park in memory Milton "Mickey" Goldsmith, Pastor Goldsmith's son who was killed in the Vietnam War.

- The church approved a plan to set up a business office in the church and to acquire a secretary to run the office.
- The youth choir, accompanied by Joan Mills Scott (Organist) and Curtis Gardin (Pianist) was featured in a concert held in Mount Holly, North Carolina.
- The Sunday School picnic was held in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

In 1976 the decision was made to build a new sanctuary.

In 1978 the property behind the church was purchased and ground was broken on February 26.

In 1979, on March 4, the first service was held in the new sanctuary. The A-Frame style building that joined to the old building by a breeze way was built at a cost of \$204,000. The old building was maintained as an education and fellowship hall.

- Ethnic Awareness programs were held commemorating the contribution of Black Americans to the development of the nation.
- The Ethel K. Mills Award was established to recognize individuals who had exhibited outstanding community service.
- A mission program was set up to routinely collect and send clothing, tools, salt and money to Uganda.
- A Christian Education Committee was established with the following directors:
 - Camilla Moore - Vacation Bible School and children;
 - Justine Conley - Youths;
 - Tommy Kilgore - Young Adults;
 - Connie Nash - Missions;
 - Selena Robinson - Ushers;
 - Ruth Johnstone, Beaulina Whiteside and Cornelius Hunt - Public Relations.
- The Helping Hand ministry was established to help people in need
- The Summer Day Camp was established to provide a fun and nurturing environment for children of working parents, so that they were not left unattended during summer vacations away from school.
- The men of the church established an annual retreat in a camp-like setting where they met to fellowship and study the Bible together. Reverend Frederick Gordon was the teacher.
- In the latter part of his tenure, Reverend Goldsmith led the movement to dissolve the Deacon Board. This was not a popular decision with everyone. Although very few people disagreed with the concept, the change was difficult for many to accept. However, with earnest prayer from both sides of the issue, the church continued to move.

In 1992, Reverend Goldsmith resigned and moved back to Simpsonville after leading the church through significant efforts that helped shape the community



Mrs. Dorothy Bjurg donated a gift of \$4800 to the Bethel "A" Baptist Church for a playground. Her request was that it be named Silversteen Memorial Playground, in memory of her late father, Joseph Silversteen.



This new housing development was named Mickey Park in memory Morris "Mickey" Goldsmith, Pastor Goldsmith's son who was killed in the Vietnam War,

Honoring Sister Mable Sharp

for outstanding Commitment, Dedication and Faithfulness,
For Extraordinary Services, Contributions and Sacrifices to serve the
Bethel "A" Baptist Church Family.



Left to Right, Rev. Tom Fletcher, Deacon Arthur Hefner, Deacon Tom Wynn, Rev. Goldsmith, Deacon Ulysses Wynn, Deacon Roy Robinson and Deacon Cornelius Hunt.



Mortgage Burning of the second building (the present educational building)



Ground breaking for new sanctuary February 26, 1978



BETHEL "A" BAPTIST CHURCH

The new sanctuary joined to the old building by a breeze way.

Helping Hand

Page 18A-The Transylvania Times, Brevard, N.C., Thursday, May 26, 1988



United Way

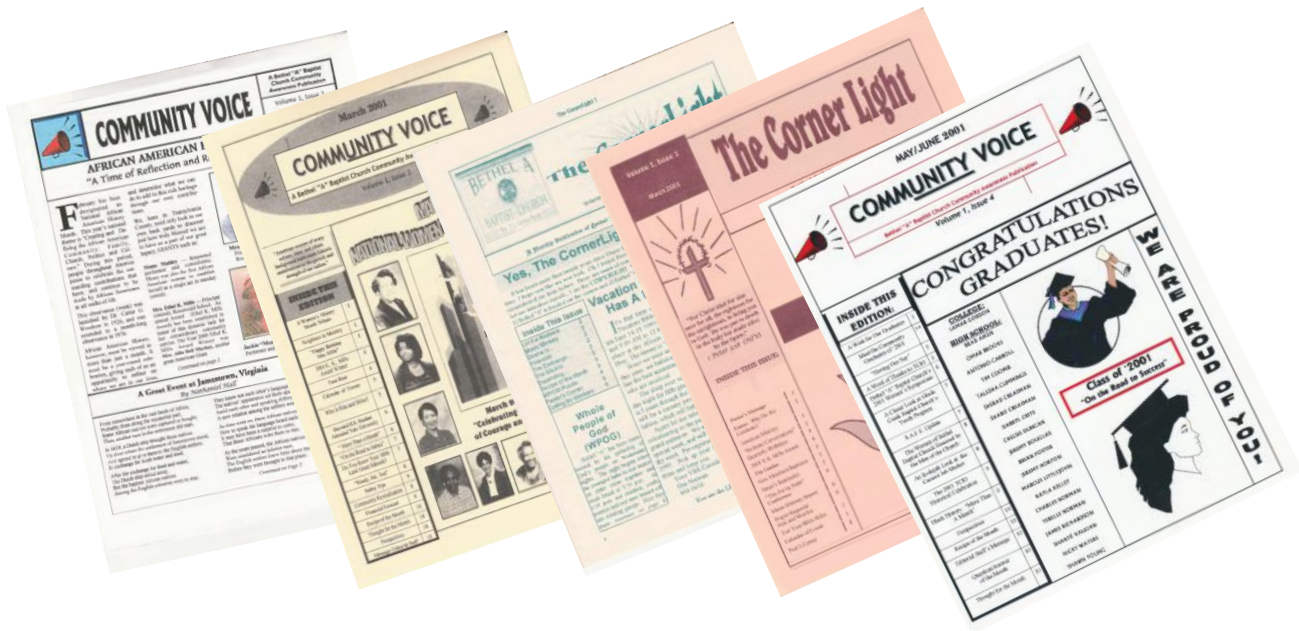
United Way's budget committee met last week to hear requests from community agencies funded by United Way. Paul Welch, III, chairman of the 1989 campaign, joins with Lorraine Fitzgerald from the Transylvania Literacy Council, Gwen Foster, Tami Moss and Ruth Johnstone from The Helping Hands, a ministry organized at Bethel "A" Baptist Church, which is seeking to become a United Way agency. Literacy Council volunteers teach adults to read. The Helping Hands distribute food to needy and provide day care programs. (Times photo by Kelly Benton)

The "Helping Hands" came about in 1987 when Gwen Jones (Foster) at that time, accepted the assignment from God to begin a single parent ministry at Bethel "A" Baptist Church. She saw the great need in the community to help single moms in several areas of their lives. Not only were there a spiritual and emotional need to be met, but they was also a financially for single mothers to make ends meet. "Helping Hands" created a food pantry, clothes closet and affordable summer camp/daycare to help the ladies while they work or while they seek employment.

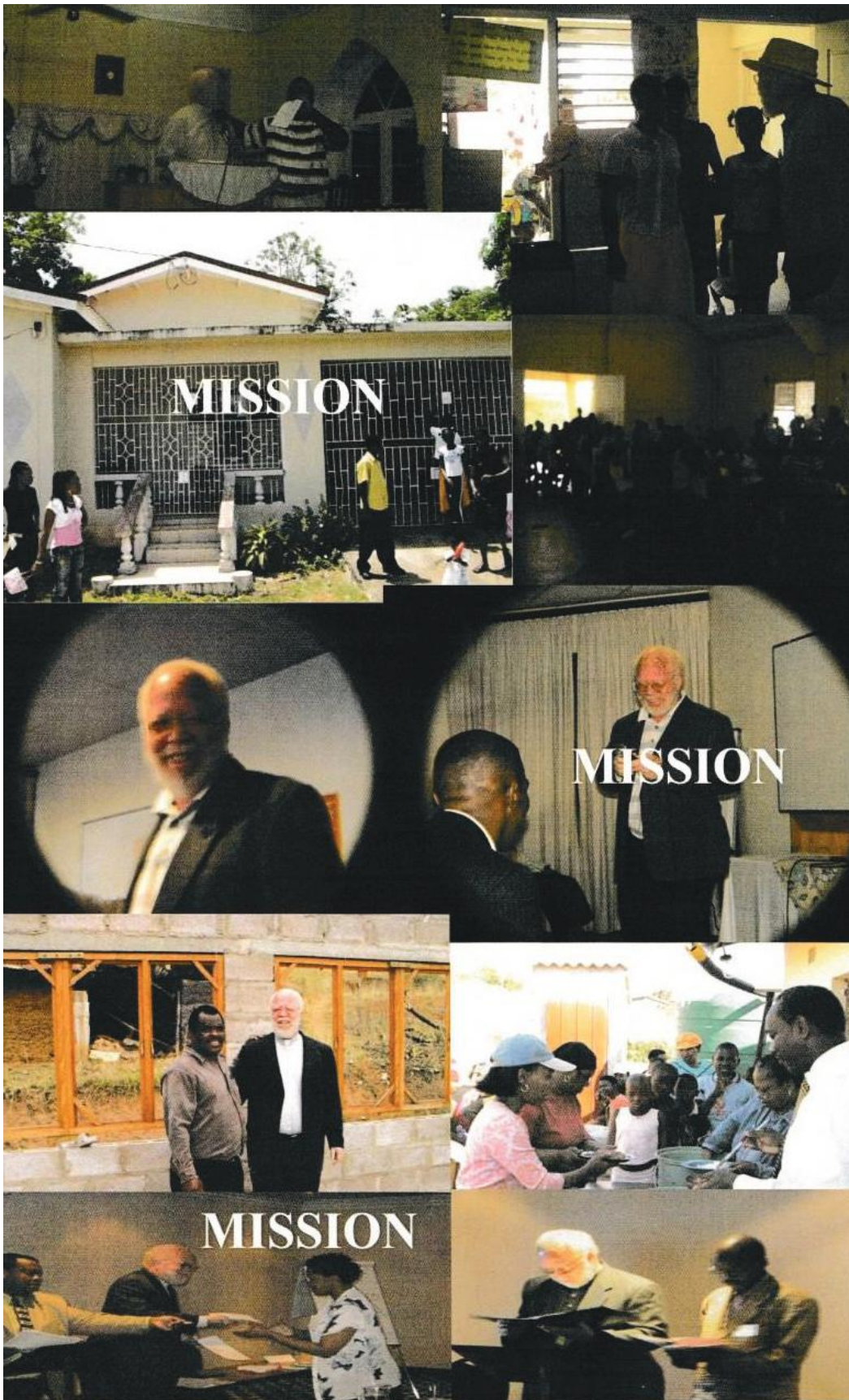
In June 1988 "Helping Hands" became a United Way member. Also, the ministry connected with Manna Food Bank for help to provide food for the pantry at church. Brother Tommy Williamson and Mr. Rufus Norman would be the catalyst of many road trips to Asheville to get the food. The ministry provided Bible study and fellowship as participants grew together in relationship with each other and with God. "Helping Hands" was for a season; the work of ministry continues to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ and His love!

Mrs. Ruth Johnstone joined Gwen in this effort to help our single moms, later Tami Moss (Logan) participated along with Brenda Hunt.

Church Newsletters



Every two months the young people of the church published a church newsletter, “The Corner Light,” as a form of communication in the community.



Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:19 King James Version (KJV)



Pastorate of Reverend F. L. Gordon
1992—2014



Reverend Fredrick L. and Minister Frankie L. Gordon



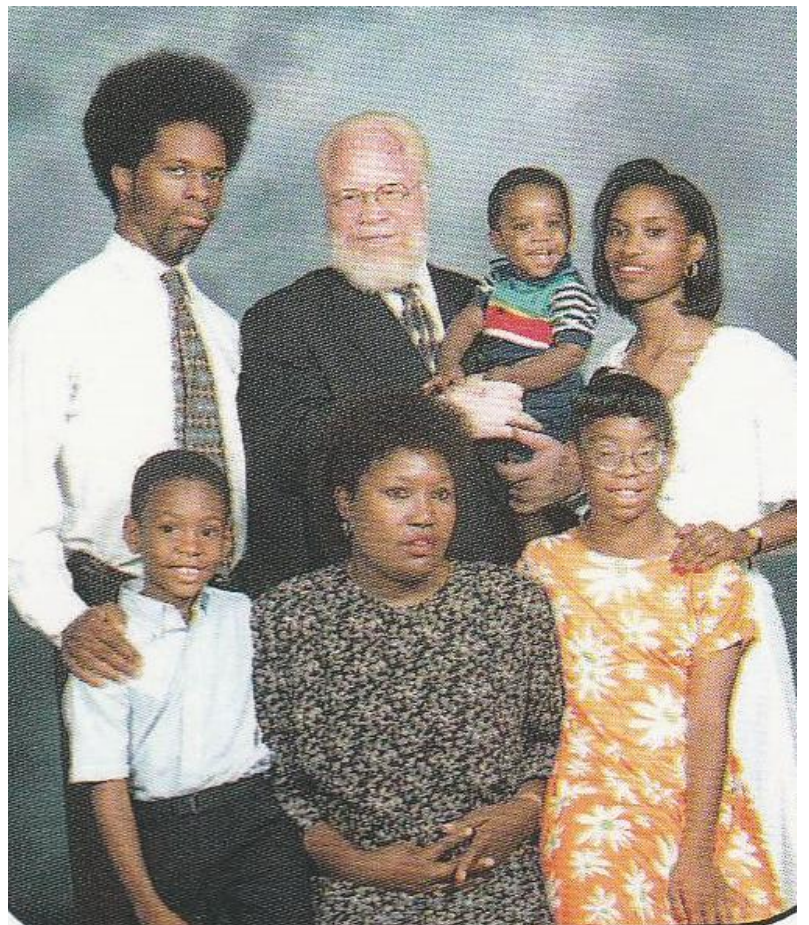
Renee



Shawn, Lewis and Lamar



Lindsey



Pastorate of Reverend Frederick L. Gordon 1992-2014

For several months after the resignation of Reverend Goldsmith, the church operated without a pastor. During this time, a variety of ministers were utilized to bring the Sunday message. In the fall of 1992, Reverend Frederick L. Gordon became the eleventh pastor.

Reverend Gordon was born in Brevard, North Carolina, where he ultimately spent most of his life. He became a Christian at the age of fourteen. At sixteen he worked as a volunteer for the Southern Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in their Summer Missionary program. After graduating from Brevard High School, he majored in psychology at Western Carolina University. He accepted the call to preach the gospel at the age of nineteen, while a freshman in college and spent his summers conducting Vacation Bible Schools in Black Baptist Churches throughout Western North Carolina. He attended Shaw Divinity School while serving in his first pastorate. He graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Theology degree. The young pastor preached his trial sermon and was ordained to preach in November 1970 during the pastorate of Reverend Raper.

Reverend Gordon served part-time as Associate Pastor of Bethel “A” Baptist Church in Brevard, North Carolina, for nine years (1965-1974). He was responsible for the Music and Education Ministry. A gifted preacher and teacher, Reverend Gordon was conscious of the social and political environment and the impact it had on his congregation. He brought a “contagiously” enthusiastic approach to the ministry. He was noted for his love for young people and his emphasis on unity within the church and the community.

In those early years of service, he married the former Frankie L. Lewis of Waynesboro, GA on December 24, 1972. During this marriage, they parented five children, one biological child (Franklin Gordon) and four adopted children (Renee Badger, Shawn Gordon, Lindsey Gordon, and Lewis Gordon), as well as four foster children. He, his wife Frankie and their five children quickly settled into the Brevard community.

Under Reverend Gordon, most of the existing outreach ministries of Reverend Goldsmith continued, though some were restructured. During his first year, the church became involved in the Jamaican Mission which supports the ministry of Reverend George Coors of Jamaica. Bethel “A” and several other churches provide an annual shipment of educational supplies to support the building and maintenance of a school facility. This program continues today as part of Reverend Gordon’s legacy. The supplies are delivered by a delegation of members from the participating churches, who then spend the better part of a week helping with the school and witnessing to the people.

Our church experienced spiritual growth due to Reverend Gordon’s teaching and preaching, and it became a ministry-driven church with an ever-increasing Children’s Ministry. The church became involved in the development of a youth billiards center called “Our Place.” The mission of the facility, which was directed by Marion “Mal” Crite, was to provide an alternative to hanging out on the corner. It offered activities for spiritual development. The building across the street from the Fellowship Hall was leased from Sister Winona Whiteside, and donations were gathered for building improvements.

Serving as pastor of Bethel “A” Baptist Church, Reverend Gordon led the church in the organization of an outreach ministry named Neighbors In Ministries. This ministry is a non-profit organization, which presently operates the Rise & Shine After-school Program, for children of minority families; a nine-week full day Summer Camp, which enrolls 50 low-income children; and an anti-racism program named Damascus Road.

The church, whose reputation reached far beyond Brevard, provided a base for social activism. In 1993, the church hosted a community workshop on “Racism: Everybody’s Problem,” which was sponsored by the Peace Fellowship of Transylvania County. The Sojourner’s study guide on white racism, “American’s Original Sin,” was used as the text. Pastor Gordon and Reverend Lynn Blankenship, a minister from First United Methodist Church of Brevard, served as host and hostess. Different speakers were brought in to present segments of the text, and then the interracial congregation broke out into groups for further processing and discussion of the lesson. At the end of the workshop, many of the participants made commitments to refrain from practicing racism and to help others recognize the pain it causes.

When the Brevard High School Black students protested the firing of Marion Crite as Home-School Coordinator and the campus’s social and race relations advisor, Bethel “A” became the primary meeting place for a Community Task Force on Education. The task force, led by the Transylvania Citizens Improvement Organization’s President Rodney Locks worked with the students to clarify and coordinate their demands and presented them to the local school board on their behalf.

For the first time under Reverend Gordon’s leadership, Bethel “A” was blessed to have preachers other than the pastor helping to spread the Word and serve the church. Victor Foster, Sr. and Marion Crite were called to preach. Also, Reverend Larry Davis joined the congregation. Shawntez Burroughs, a student at Schenck Job Corp Center, was called to preach and served until he left for Alabama to pursue a degree in Forestry.

Jonalyn Crite, Frankie Gordon, Lamar Gordon, Tami Forte Moss (Tami Forte Logan), Gwendolyn Jones, Spencer Jones, Ruth Peters, and Sharad Creasman were all called to preach. Eleven persons accepted the call to preach under Reverend Gordon’s Pastorate.

During this period, repairs were made to the Fellowship Hall, office equipment was upgraded with a new printer and access to a personal computer, and the sound system was upgraded. A joint Wednesday night Prayer and Worship service with Bethel and Glade Creek Baptist Churches was instituted. Each church took turns as the monthly host of the service. A Radio Ministry carried by the local radio station WPNF broadcasted the Sunday morning services to the sick and shut-ins.

Reverend Gordon was very resourceful in attaining funds to extend the Summer Day Camp Program to include after school hours during the school terms. He also promoted a sense of community among the churches. He supported and participated in other important personal development and community building efforts. He served on the planning team for the TranSTAR (Students Teach and Reach) program, as well as many other boards and committees.

The aforementioned Rise & Shine After School Program was an impactful project that continues today. Pastor Gordon’s vision grew into a far-reaching effort that included volunteers from many Brevard churches as well as two community teams, all of which committed to on-going tutoring, mentoring, and just generally encouraging scholars from the Bethel “A” area and beyond. Few programs have awakened the citizens of this town to the importance of fighting racism and inequality more than Rise & Shine. Pastor Gordon inspired Fay Walker to devote much of her retirement time to developing financial and organizational support for this endeavor.

The devoted and hardworking staff has widened the world of hundreds of children over the years, and the dedication of Tami Forte Logan (formerly Moss) and Lamar Gordon led to a program with a statewide reputation for innovation and achievement. Scholars traveled to Atlanta, Charlotte, and Washington, DC, to learn more about African-American achievements, and they also have had their hometown horizons broadened through theater attendance, ballet performances, art exhibits and dozens of guest speakers and performances. To this day, Bethel “A” Baptist Church and Rise & Shine are often cited by area citizens and groups as an example of the power of investing in our children. The current staff, board, and volunteers carry on the effort to broaden the world of Rise & Shine scholars and to help them reach ever higher academically, socially, and personally.

Reverend Gordon led the church into an intense community outreach ministry which included a church-wide emphasis to evangelize our children through the development of the following ministries:

Bus Stop: An early morning program for school age children to gather.

Study Hall: An after-school program for Middle School and High School students.

Fish and Loaves: A ministry that fed any and all people four days a week.

“Take It To The Street”: A ministry of street and park evangelism.

Golden Circle: A ministry to those of 55 years and older.

He also led the church in adopting and supporting mission work in Jamaica, and he led the church in sending and sponsoring a husband and wife missionary team to Jamaica for one year.

The church was looking toward the future with emphasis on outreach ministry, Bible study, and personal commitment, all geared toward helping people and lifting up the name of the Lord so that the opportunity for Salvation could be shared with all who would listen. These were the continuing goals for the innovative and devoted pastor. The once fourteen year old Christian boy had become an ever-growing and ever-learning man of God.

That man left those goals for us to carry on. Reverend Fredrick L. Gordon made his transition from this world into the Eternal on Sunday, May 4, 2014, at his home in Brevard.



Ministers called to Preach Under the leadership of Pastor Gordon



Min. Shawntez Burroughs



Rev. Justine Conley



Rev. Sharad Creasman



Minister Jonalyn Crite



Rev. Marion Crite



Min. Victor Foster



Rev. Jeremy Franklin



Minister Frankie Gordon



Minister Lamar Gordon



Rev. Brandon Jones



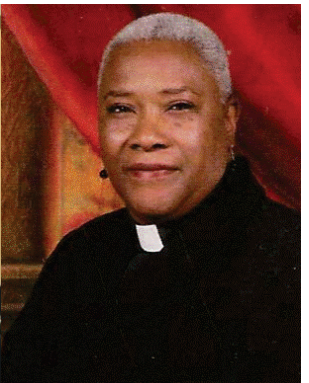
Rev. Gwendolyn Jones



Rev. Spencer Jones



Rev. Tami Logon



Minister Ruth Peters

Bethel “A” Baptist Church

YOUTH



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Proverb 22:6 NIV

NIM

Neighbors In Ministry exists to enrich children, empower parents and encourage community through year-round programs. Our programs enable children and adults to work for equality of opportunity and to build the Beloved Community of racial justice and reconciliation. We are motivated by the spirit of Christian faith.



NIM Board of Directory 2002 (Above)



Board of Directory 2019

SEATED, left to right: Barbara Grimm, Carol Dugger, **Secretary** Julia Gray, **Assistant Treasurer**
STANDING, left to right: Tommy Kilgore Judy Griffin, **President** Ray Adams, **Treasurer**
Minister Ruth Peters, Maureen Copelof, **Vice President**
NOT PICTURED: Julie Heinitsh



HOSTESSES

Julie Bahnson

Nancy Whitmire

Elizabeth Baker

Pauline Wynn

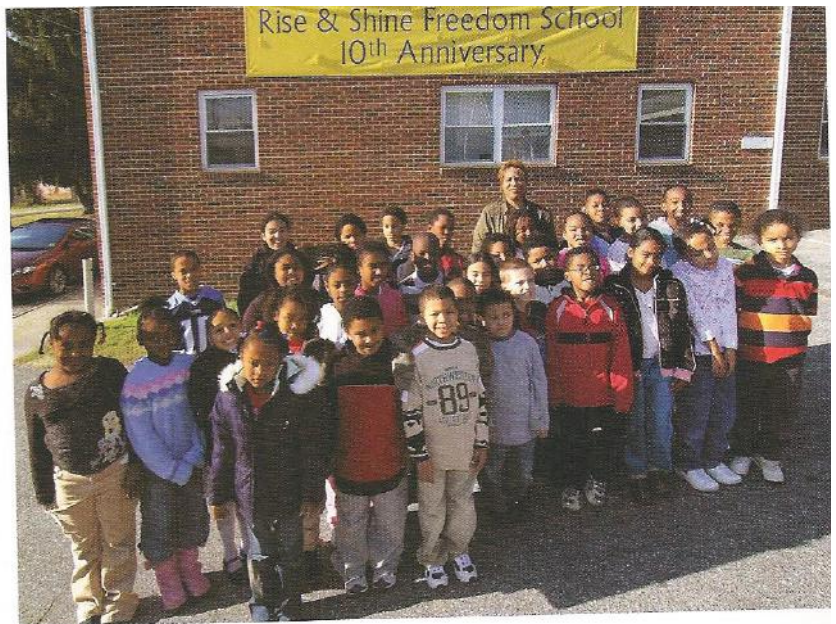
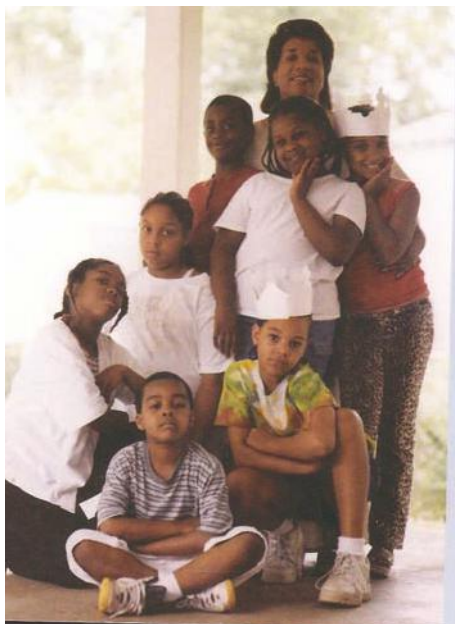
Verdell Townsend

Jackie Wynn

Marva Lytle

Georgia Ann Gardin

Lynette Wynn





RISE & SHINE





BABC MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDY HALL



WINGS OF PRAISE

